



Formerly Telephone Counseling and Referral Service, Inc.

2-1-1 Big Bend, Inc.
P.O. Box 10950
Tallahassee, FL 32302

June 5, 2007

Marlene H. Dortch, Commission's Secretary
Office of the Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th St., S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

Subject: DA 07-2017
Designation of 2-1-1 and 5-1-1 as abbreviated dialing codes
CC Docket NO. 92-105

Dear Secretary Dortch:

2-1-1 Big Bend, Inc. hereby submits its Comments to Public Notice DA 07-2017, released May 7, 2007. The Public Notice requested comments on the status of implementation of the 211 and 511 Dialing Codes. Further, the Public Notice requested comments on actions the Commission should take if these Dialing Codes are not widely used. 2-1-1 Big Bend is limiting its comments to the status of 2-1-1 service in Florida.

2-1-1 Big Bend has provided information and referral services in Florida since 1970 and 2-1-1 service to the Tallahassee/North Florida eight-county region since February 11, 2003 reaching a population of 420,000. The database of service providers used for making referrals has listings for 1,056 programs. In 2006 our 2-1-1 call center answered 16,428 calls. In February 2007 we achieved universal access for wireless callers in our service region via an interactive voice recognition (IVR) system through a partnership with the Florida Alliance of Information and Referral Services and the State of Florida Department of Management Services. In addition, we provide referral assistance to more than 45,000 annual visitors through our online searchable resource directory at www.211bigbend.org. Our Center operates by nationally recognized standards and was awarded Accreditation by the Alliance of Information and Referral Systems.

The most common reasons clients give for calling 2-1-1 Big Bend are personal relationship concerns, housing assistance, basic needs assistance (e.g., clothing, transportation and food), utilities assistance and emergency shelter. Our 2-1-1 program provides a blend of crisis hotline and community information and referral services. We typically help at least one person every day who is calling because they are contemplating suicide. Since becoming a 2-1-1 service provider, 2-1-1 Big Bend has developed written agreements and worked closely with organizations in our emergency preparedness and response system. This was particularly important in 2005 when our community assisted hundreds of Hurricane Katrina victims.

We respectfully request that the Commission find the public is well-served by the use of 2-1-1, that the Commission continue to support the 2-1-1 Dialing Code for this purpose, and that the Commission use its authority to facilitate more widespread use of the service.

Sincerely,

Randall S. Nicklaus
President

Creating a Caring and Connected Community



A United Way Agency